

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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P 311758Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4495

INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 25323

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON OLIVIER GUICHARD,
NEWLY-NAMED MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTER OF JUSTICE

REF: PARIS 25052

1. BORN IN 1920 AT NEAC (GIRONDE), GUICHARD HOLDS DEGREES IN LITERATURE AND LAW AND HAS A DIPLOMA FROM THE ECOLE DES SCIENCES POLITIQUES. HIS OFFICIAL ASSOCIATION WITH DE GAULLE STARTED AFTER WORLD WAR II WHEN HE BECAME CHARGE DE MISSION OF THE RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE FRANCAIS IN 1945. SUCCEEDING GEORGES POMPIDOU AS DE GAULLE'S CHEF DU CABINET IN 1947, GUICHARD HAD A LONG PERIOD OF SERVICE WITH THE GENERAL IN A SUCCESSION OF STAFF AND PERSONAL POSITIONS IN AND AROUND DE GAULLE'S ENTOURAGE. HE WAS WITH DE GAULLE DURING HIS VOYAGES TO THE FRENCH TERRITORIES IN THE 1950'S, EARNING THE RARE DISTINCTION OF BEING ONE OF THE FEW WHO TRAVERSED THE "DESERT" OF THE GENERAL'S POLITICAL FORTUNES IN COMPANY

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WITH HIM. GUICHARD BECAME AN ADVISER TO DE GAULLE ON

INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS, AND ACCORDING TO LE MONDE, WAS ONE OF THE "MAINSPRINGS" BEHIND THE GENERAL'S RETURN TO POWER IN 1958. GUICHARD WAS APPOINTED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DE GAULLE'S PERSONAL CABINET IN 1958, LATER BECOMING TECHNICAL COUNSELOR FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN 1959.

2. GUICHARD ALSO MAINTAINED A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH POMPIDOU, A RELATIONSHIP DATING BACK TO THE POST-WAR PERIOD, AND SERVED AS POMPIDOU'S CHARGE DE MISSION FROM 1962-67 WHILE POMPIDOU WAS PRIME MINISTER. DURING THE EARLY 1960'S, GUICHARD HELD SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT POSTS, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL DELEGATE TO THE TRANSPORTATION AND PLANNING MINISTRIES, AND MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE-OWNED RADIO-TELEVISION.

3. GUICHARD FIRST ENTERED THE GOVERNMENT AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL IN 1967, WHEN HE WAS NAMED MINISTER OF INDUSTRY UNDER POMPIDOU. AFTER CHABAN-DELMAS BECAME PRIME MINISTER, GUICHARD WAS NAMED MINISTER OF NATIONAL EDUCATION IN 1969, A POSITION WHICH HE HELD UNTIL 1972. AS EDUCATION MINISTER, GUICHARD TOOK OVER AN EMPIRE OF SOME 900,000 EMPLOYEES, WHICH HAD BEEN SEVERELY TRAUMATIZED BY THE EVENTS OF 1968, AND HIS HANDLING OF MANY PROBLEMS WON HIM HIGH PRAISE FROM ALL BUT THE MOST RADICAL OPPONENTS. IN 1971 HE UNDERTOOK A FACT-FINDING MISSION TO THE U.S. AND WAS RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT AND THE THEN SECRETARY OF HEW RICHARDSON. (HE ALSO CALLED ON THEN GOVERNOR JIMMY CARTER, WITH WHOM HE REPORTEDLY WAS HIGHLY IMPRESSED). UNDER THE PREMIERSHIP OF PIERRE MESSMER, GUICHARD HELD THE POST OF MINISTER FOR TRANSPORTATION AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING, FROM 1972-74; NEAR THE END OF THIS TERM HE WAS GIVEN THE ADDITIONAL HONORARY TITLE OF

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4496

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AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 25323

MINISTER OF STATE.

4. PARALLEL TO HIS GOVERNMENT CAREER, GUICHARD HAS ALSO BEEN ACTIVE IN POLITICS ON THE LOCAL LEVEL. HE WAS FIRST ELECTED DEPUTY FROM THE LOIRE-ATLANTIQUE IN 1967 AND HAS SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN RE-ELECTED THREE TIMES. MAYOR OF HIS HOME TOWN (NEAC) FROM 1962-71, HE WAS ELECTED MAYOR OF LA BAULE IN 1971, A POSITION WHICH HE CURRENTLY HOLDS. SINCE 1974, HE HAS BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE LOIRE.

5. IN ADDITION TO BEING ONE OF THE "BARONS" OF THE GAULLIST (UDR) PARTY, GUICHARD'S LINKS WITH GISCARD'S RI PARTY HAVE NOT SUFFERED BY THE MARRIAGE OF GUICHARD'S DAUGHTER TO THE SON OF MICHEL PONIATOWSKI, CURRENT MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN PARTY, AND ONE OF GISCARD'S CLOSEST CONFIDANTS. GUICHARD IS SAID TO HAVE A TREMENDOUS CONFIDENTIAL

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CAPACITY FOR WORK AND A SUBTLE POLITICAL MIND. GUICHARD'S PRESENCE IN THE NEW CABINET CAN BE EXPECTED, MORE THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER GAULLIST, TO HOLD THE TOUCHY UDR IN LINE. (NOTE: THERE WAS NO LOVE LOST BETWEEN CHIRAC AND GUICHARD). INTERNATIONALLY, GUICHARD HAS AN OPEN MIND ON EUROPEAN UNITY AND THE ELECTION OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS THROUGH UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE (WHICH SEPARATES HIM SOMEWHAT FROM CURRENT AND MORE RIGID GAULLIST THINKING ON THIS SCORE). IN GUICHARD, GISCARD WILL FIND A TOUGH INTERLOCUTOR WITHIN HIS GOVERNMENT. GAMMON

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